

REMARKS

The present application was originally filed with 18 Claims. In the present Restriction Requirement, the Examiner has restricted the Claims into four Groups:

- 1) Group I contains Claims 1-15, directed to methods for combinatorial consensus mutagenesis;
- 2) Group II contains Claim 16, directed to a stabilized variant of beta-lactamase;
- 3) Group III contains Claim 17, directed to a stabilized variant of carcinoembryonic antigen binder; and
- 4) Group IV contains Claim 18, directed to a stabilized single chain fragment variable region.

The Examiner argues that the Groups represent separate and patentably distinct inventions. The Examiner has also made a species election requirement. However, it is unclear what the Examiner's species election is directed toward. It appears that the Examiner is requiring that Applicants choose between Claim 5 and 6 in this Restriction Requirement. Applicants must respectfully traverse the restriction requirement, Applicants hereby elect the Claims in Group I (Claims 1-15), directed to methods for combinatorial consensus mutagenesis. Applicants have cancelled Claims 16-18 and have withdrawn Claim 6, pursuant to the species election requirement. Applicants respectfully submit that there is no additional burden for the Examiner to examine both Claims 5 and 6 in this application. Should the Examiner withdraw the species election with regard to Claims 5 and 6, Applicants respectfully request that both of these Claims be examined with the rest of the Claims in Group I (Claims 1-4 and 7-15).

Applicants reserve the right to file Divisional application(s) to pursue the cancelled Claims. Should the Examiner have any questions regarding this application, she is encouraged to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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